

Spay/Neuter Post-Operative Instructions

Your pet has had major surgery and appropriate recovery care is important to prevent complications. Following the instructions below will help ensure your pet has a safe and comfortable recovery.

Tonight

- Your pet may appear a bit sleepy, groggy, or agitated the first night because of the anesthesia. Normal behaviour and energy levels should return by tomorrow.
- Give your pet a warm, comfortable, and quiet place to recover.

Diet

- After surgery, your pet's appetite should return within 24 hours. Give your pet a half-size meal when you bring them home. Feeding can return to normal the following day. Water should always be available.
- Do not change your pet's diet during the surgical recovery period or give extra treats as this could cause stomach upset.
- If your pet has an E-collar (cone), it can be removed for feeding while the pet is supervised.
- Please contact us if your pet is not interested in eating for more than 24 hours.



Incision Care

- Female dogs and cats have an incision on their abdomen (stomach). Male dogs have an incision in front of the scrotum. Male cats have two incisions, one on each side of the scrotum.
- Check the incision daily to make sure it is healing as expected. Mild redness and swelling can be normal but should improve during the recovery period. A small bump under the incision is normal due to the stitches under the skin. Worsening redness and swelling, discharge, odor, or opening of the incision are not normal. Please contact us with a photo of the incision if you have any concerns with how it is healing.
- Dogs and female cats have internal stitches that will dissolve on their own after four months. These stitches do not need to be removed. Male cats do not have stitches – the incisions are allowed to heal on their own.
- Prevent your pet from licking the incision. Some pets may leave the incision alone, but some will need to wear an e-collar (plastic cone) to prevent licking. If needed, this should be kept on for up to 7-10 days after surgery.
- Keep the incision dry. Do not bathe your pet for 10 days. Do not apply any creams, antiseptics, or sprays to the incision. Do not apply a bandage to the incision.
- All animals will have a small green tattoo placed next to the incision (or for male cats, over the belly button) to indicate that a spay or neuter has been performed. The hair will grow back over the tattoo, and it will not be visible.
- The incisions and tattoos have surgical glue applied, which can cause a crusty or flaking appearance as it heals.



Pain Management

- Each patient receives pain medications before and after the surgery. We use multiple types of pain medications including opioids, non-steroidal anti-inflammatory medications, and local anesthetics (freezing) to provide pain relief.
- For cats, the pain medication injection given at surgery (Meloxicam) lasts for 24 hours. No additional medications are sent home.
- For dogs, each patient receives an oral pain reliever (Meloxicam) sent home. Please follow the instructions on the package label and begin this medication the day AFTER surgery.
- Side effects of Meloxicam may include stomach upset (vomiting, diarrhea, low appetite). Please discontinue the medication if any of these symptoms occur and contact us to determine if a recheck examination is necessary.
- Please contact us if you feel that your pet is painful. Do not administer any human pain relievers as these are often toxic to pets.

Activity

- It is very important to limit your pet's activity for 7-10 days after surgery. Strenuous activity such as running, jumping, or playing could disrupt the healing process and cause the incision to become swollen or open.
- Keep cats indoors for 7-10 days after surgery.
- For dogs, keep walks brief (less than 10 minutes) and use a leash for 7-10 days after surgery. Avoid dog parks, off-leash running, or rough play.
- Animals returning from the clinic may smell different to other animals in the household. This can cause the animals to fight, so be prepared to keep your pets in separate areas for a few days following surgery.

Complications and Emergency Care

Spaying and neutering are both very safe surgeries. However, complications can still occur. Contact us immediately if you notice any of the following symptoms:

- Worsening redness or swelling of the incision
- Bleeding or discharge from the incision
- Pale gums
- Lethargy or depression
- Loss of appetite
- Vomiting
- Difficulty urinating or defecating
- Labored breathing
- Wobbly or unsteady while walking

If you have concerns with your pet's recovery, please email csa@torontohumanesociety.com or call us at 416-392-2273 ext. 2250. If you are sent to our voicemail, please leave a detailed message and somebody will call you back as soon as possible. We are open from 9:00 AM - 5:00 PM from Monday to Friday. Please see our website for any additional closure updates. If your concern is about how the incision is healing, please include a photo.

If you have an urgent or emergency concern outside of our clinic hours, you will need to contact your local veterinarian or emergency clinic. If you take your pet to an emergency clinic or to another veterinarian for treatment, the cost will not be refunded by Toronto Humane Society Public Veterinary Services.



Emergency Clinic Reference List

This list is a reference only. Toronto Humane Society does not necessarily recommend or endorse these facilities. This is not a complete list and there may be emergency veterinary services which are not listed below.

Central Toronto Veterinary Emergency Clinic

1051 Eglinton Ave West, Toronto
416-784-4444

Mississauga-Oakville Veterinary Emergency Hospital (MOVEH)

2285 Bristol Circle, Oakville
905-829-9444

Veterinary Emergency and Referral Hospital of West Toronto

755 Queensway East, #116 Mississauga
416-239-3453

Toronto Veterinary Emergency Hospital (TVEH)

21 Rolark Dr, Scarborough
416-247-8387

Vaughan-Richmond Hill Veterinary Emergency Clinic

10303 Yonge St, Richmond Hill
905-884-1832

Veterinary Emergency Clinic (VEC)

920 Yonge St Suite 117, Toronto
416-920-2002

404 Veterinary Emergency and Referral Hospital

510 Harry Walker Parkway South, Newmarket
905-953-1933

Toronto Animal Health Partners Emergency and Specialty Hospital

1 Scarsdale Road, North York
416-380-7400

